

VZCZCXR00633  
PP RUEHCN RUEHGH RUEHVC  
DE RUEHHK #0155 0250103  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 250103Z JAN 08  
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3962  
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHHI/AMEMBASSY HANOI PRIORITY 3636

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 000155

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP/RSA, EAP/CM, G/TIP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/25/2033

TAGS: KWMN KCRM PGOV PHUM ELAB SMIG ASEC CH HK MC  
SUBJECT: MACAU PROSECUTES FIRST TIP CASE AND JOINS WITH  
HONG KONG TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING

REF: HONG KONG 2360

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Macau Public Prosecutions Office (PPO) announced January 17, 2008 that it had charged the first-ever suspect in a case of international human trafficking through Macau. According to "Macau Daily News," a Vietnamese woman was charged with human trafficking after she recruited four Vietnamese women in Vietnam and brought them to Macau via China to work in a massage parlor. Upon arrival, the alleged trafficker forced the victims to offer sexual services to customers and subsequently forced them to pay back visa application fees and transportation charges; the victims then reported the case to the police. In a separate but related development, the Macau Human Trafficking Deterrent Measures Concern Committee discussed laws and measures used in Hong Kong to prevent and prosecute cases of human trafficking, as well as methods used to protect and support victims with counterparts in the Hong Kong government and Disciplined Services on January 18, 2007. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) Comment: The first prosecution of a trafficking case in Macau is important evidence of the Macau government's decision to make fighting TIP a priority. The authorities in Macau and Hong Kong have shared information and cooperated in the past when investigating money laundering and corruption, among other crimes, but Macau's willingness to reach out to its neighbor and coordinate on cross-border human trafficking cases is a practical step to increase its capacity to deal with trafficking. In addition, Chinese and English-language newspapers in Macau are increasingly reporting on trafficking in persons cases and related developments, helping to raise awareness among those living in or visiting the burgeoning enclave. End comment.

Macau's First TIP Prosecution

---

¶3. (SBU) The Public Prosecutions Office (PPO) in Macau announced on January 17 that it had charged a suspect in the first prosecuted case of international human trafficking through Macau. Press reports did not specify when the alleged crimes were committed, but the PPO said the case had been delivered to the court for hearing and the alleged trafficker would face a maximum penalty of eight years' imprisonment.

¶4. (C) According to "Macau Daily News," a Vietnamese woman was charged with human trafficking after she recruited four Vietnamese women in Vietnam and brought them into Macau, via China, to work in a massage parlor. Upon arrival, the trafficker allegedly forced the women to offer sexual services to customers. When the victims refused, the trafficker forced them to pay back visa application fees and transportation charges totaling 2,500 USD each, and also

threatened the safety of their family members in Vietnam if they failed to pay. The income already earned by the victims was taken by the trafficker, who only gave each victim 70 patacas (approximately 10 USD) per week for living expenses. The victims then reported the case to the police. Sister Juliana Devoy (protect), Director of the Good Shepherd Sisters women's shelter in Macau, told poloff that she interpreted the recent prosecution as "evidence the government is getting serious."

Macau and Hong Kong Join to Combat Trafficking

---

¶5. (SBU) In a separate but related development, the Human Trafficking Deterrent Measures Concern Committee in Macau (see reftel) met with counterparts in the Hong Kong government and Disciplined Services on January 18, 2007 to discuss existing laws and measures used in Hong Kong to prevent and prosecute cases of human trafficking, as well as methods used to protect and support victims. The Chief of Office in the Office of the Secretary for Security in Macau and the coordinator of the concern committee, Vong Chun-fat, met with Hong Kong's Permanent Secretary for Security Chang King-yiu, along with representatives from the Hong Kong Police Force, Department of Justice, and Immigration and Health departments; they agreed to strengthen regional cooperation, especially the exchange of intelligence, against human trafficking.

Cunningham